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ABSTRACT

Published once each semester by Manhattan College (New York), the report serves as a resource for faculty and students as they deal with professional ethical dilemmas and conflicts in their course work and work lives; it also helps to further the Center for Professional Ethics basic purpose of promoting greater sensitivity to the ethical dimensions of professional life within society. The lead article in this issue, "Empowerment for Change," by Bernard Noone, discusses five ways in which Manhattan College's revised general education curriculum emphasizes the overarching value of the critical study of human experience and empowers students to become active participants in their own development. Also in this issue is an announcement of two Center-awarded grants for course modules; reviews of three books on business ethics; and an article on computers and education by Eileen Brady. A brief editorial by John R. Wilcox provides a restatement of the Center's purpose. (TRS)

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Manhattan College
Center For
Professional Ethics

Report

Vol. II, No. 1 Manhattan College, Riverdale, N.Y.

Empowerment for Change

by Dr. Bernard Noone

Education has been described as the process of changing the minds of the young...no easy task in any age. The need for this "change of mind" is perhaps even more pressing today than in the past. Millions of young people are still flocking to college, many of them for purely "vocational" reasons. Still others come from social backgrounds which do not hold in high esteem the values of the intellectual life. Changing the minds of such young men and women means influencing their value system.

How do we change the minds of young men and women? That, it seems to me, is the task of the inspired teacher. But teachers cannot always do this alone. A curriculum must be designed to aid in the task of reshaping the minds of our contemporary students. It is in the construction and revision of the curriculum that there emerges the question of which values are to be presented. What are the values that undergird the current general education curriculum revision in the School of Arts and Sciences?

The proposed course of study is organized in ways which demonstrate that coherent intellectual analysis is the most viable way of understanding the human experience. Concern and respect for all ways of critical probing and questioning constitute the basis of this approach to the intellectual life. The student is encouraged to become an active, imaginative learner. In the new curriculum we seek to emphasize the value of the critical study of the data of human experience.

The curriculum presents this overarching value - this empowerment for change - in five complementary ways. In each of the five ways specific intellectual values are proffered to the students. First the curriculum on all levels seeks to nurture critical thinking among the students. The curriculum is supposed to free the students to think for themselves both quantitatively and qualitatively, to comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate data and to articulate their thoughts in clear, precise English. The students are encouraged to move beyond the elementary tasks of rote memory and mere superficial data collecting to an imaginative and articulate understanding of ideas.

Second, a concern for broadening the geographic, ethnic, racial and cultural perspectives of the student is exhibited in the new curriculum. In appropriate ways each course will assist in the development of a "global perspective" in the students' perception of human experience. Provincialism and narrow-mindedness have no place in the intelligent grasp of the world in the last decades of the twentieth century.

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Designed and edited by Lydia E. Arena, director

Editorial

Restatement of purpose

by Dr. John Wilcox

"Greater sensitivity to the ethical dimensions of professional life within the context of a rapidly changing society." The Center's purpose cannot be stated more succinctly. It is already clear that there are many ways to reach this goal: reflection, redefinition, evaluation, synthesis, conversations with colleagues and alumni/ae, and the development of course modules, workshops, and conferences.

In line with this pluralistic approach, the Center stands ready to meet the needs of its several constituencies by addressing a wide range of issues. Rather than focusing on one area, such as business ethics or medical ethics, the Center seeks to be inclusive, introducing its audience to the diverse and growing number of scholarly resources in the varied fields of professional ethics. Following the dissemination model integral to the philosophy statement, staff members see themselves as facilitators, enabling members of the community to communicate to their own colleagues and clients a sensitivity to ethical concerns.

It is abundantly clear that a task so broadly defined needs wide resources. The staff members bring to the Center their own expertise, interests, perspectives - and limitations, while seeking to be of service to the academic community. We also need the help of our colleagues. A primary ethical concern in the contemporary world is the need for interdependence, as opposed to either domination or isolation. We depend on our colleagues to alert us to significant issues in their fields, to apprise us of needs that the Center could meet, to publicize our activities. A column in which faculty exchange different points of view on relevant ethical issues will be included in the next newsletter.

At present largely dependent for financial support on the administration of Manhattan College, the Center increasingly looks to funding from other sources. From faculty, alumni/ae, and Board members, we welcome collaboration in grant writing and other suggestions for financial viability so that the Center can eventually become self-supporting. We especially appeal to the faculty of Manhattan College and the College of Mount St. Vincent to continue their interest in the work of the Center which is so clearly related to the goals of both Colleges.

Center Awarded Two Grants

A significant aspect of the Center's activities is assisting faculty members in sensitizing students to the ethical ramifications of decision making and rapid changes in the professions. Furthermore, projects which carry out this objective also provide valuable assistance to practitioners in the world of work itself. These goals have been realized through two grants which will provide funding for the development of course modules on computer ethics and the ethical issues in the internationalization of American business.

In April of 1985, Dr. Thomas Smith, Director of the Manhattan College Computer Literacy Project, notified the Center that its proposal to develop two ethics course modules was approved. The two modules will deal with privacy and power as well as ownership and copyright. This project is a response to the need many teachers have to discuss the social and ethical dimensions of computer use. The materials developed will assist faculty and, by extension, professionals in the field in understanding ethical issues more fully and teaching them more confidently.

The following issues will be addressed in the computer ethics module: understanding and assessing the dilemma of two values in conflict: technology and privacy. In developing this theme, the nature of privacy will be examined in terms of why it is a value and in what sense it is a right. The effect of various computer data bases on privacy will be assessed. The impact of the computer on the allocation and centralization of power in various institutional settings will also be examined. The case study method will be used to simulate analysis, reflection, and decision-making procedures. Pedagogical strategies will also be discussed and bibliographical and audio-visual resources will be listed and annotated.

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Book Review Corner

by Dr. Marion Hunt, S.C.

The wave of business ethics books currently flooding the market attests to the popularity of the subject while increasing the difficulty of choice. To assist busy people in selecting the right book for their purposes, the newsletter in this issue reviews three works in the field of business ethics. This service will continue periodically in future issues.

Thomas Donaldson and Patricia Werhane. ***Ethical Issues in Business: A Philosophical Approach,*** second edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice-Hall, 1983.

This anthology of well chosen articles discusses theoretical issues as well as the application of theory to practical problems encountered in business. The second edition contains a new introductory essay sketching major theories of philosophical ethics with clarity and simplicity. Although the instructor will have to supply nuances and explanations, this introduction gives students an excellent tool for grappling with such theoretical points as the distinction between utilitarian and deontological ethics. In the book's first section which deals with somewhat abstract ethical issues such as relativism and egoism, there are enough case studies and other concrete approaches to hold student interest. Subsequent sections deal with conventional topics of business such as morality and corporations, property and profits, and theories of justice. An interesting section on contemporary business includes a discussion of such issues as affirmative action and environmental ethics. Each major division includes a happy mix of theoretical articles (e.g., Adam Smith on the profit motive, John Locke on property rights, John Rawls on justice) and case studies. In general, the more theoretical articles are well chosen for readability. True, some of these will require guidance from the instructor, at least in the form of focused questions. But overall, the anthology avoids those mind-crushing articles, bristling with subtle reasonings, that so often make the teaching of undergraduate ethics unnecessarily tedious. The case studies are not only interesting but have the added advantage of variety. Some, like the Chrysler bailout or the accident at Three Mile Island, are developed at length, giving the teacher a built-in opportunity for varying teaching strategies. The authors' short introductions to each of the four major parts, giving the students an overview of the section and some clues to the thrust of the articles, are particularly helpful.

Manuel G. Velasquez. ***Business Ethics: Cases and Concepts.*** Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice-Hall, 1982.

For those, on the other hand, who prefer a one-author text to an anthology, Velasquez's book fills the bill. The author maintains the advantages of an anthology because he has absorbed a prodigious amount of material by writers in ethics, business, and related areas and has woven this material into his own synthesis of business ethics. His explanation of ethical reasoning and theories in the first two chapters is lengthy and nuanced but enlivened by case studies and clarified by summaries and questions for discussion. The three kinds of moral principles - those based on utility, on rights, and on justice - which he develops in Part I are consistently applied to the practical business issues discussed in the other three parts of the book. These deal respectively with the market and business, business as it affects the environment and consumers, and business in its internal arrangements (employees' issues). A unique feature of the book is the author's painstaking efforts to familiarize the reader with the empirical data involved in business problems so that the attempt to apply principles will be an informed one. For example, before discussing such marketplace issues as price-fixing or bribe-taking, Velasquez gives an overview of the workings of the marketplace as well as furnishing background on economic theory from Adam Smith through Lord Keynes to the present. The philosophy instructor may not want to cover this material in detail but the condensed presentation of such useful information will be a boon to the instructor and a good refresher for business students. Similar sections giving data on environmental problems and job discrimination are extremely helpful in furnishing background for factually based ethical argument. Well subtitled Concepts and Cases, the book presents a wealth of conceptual background and helpful aids in analyzing the specific cases generously interspersed throughout the text (at least two at the end of each chapter). Teachers reluctant to prod students through entire articles in an anthology will be grateful to Velasquez for having summarized key points of many anthologized authors. Instructors who must cover a business ethics course in one semester, however, will be forced to focus the students attention on the highlights, especially in the theoretical sections of the book. There simply will not be time to follow all the author's arguments and counterarguments, although one must admire the fairness with which he tries to present the various positions and the arguments against them.

John B. Matthews, Kenneth E. Goodpaster, Laura L. Nash. ***Policies and Persons: A Casebook in Business Ethics.*** New York, NY. McGraw-Hill, 1985.

This book differs from the others reviewed here; it is exactly what its title claims - a casebook without text. Cases (some 500 pages of them) are grouped in four sections, the first dealing with PERSONAL VALUES, the

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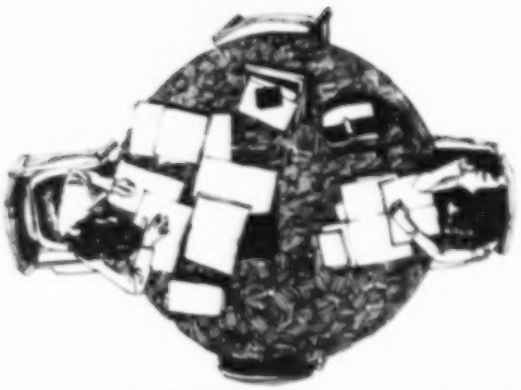
Book Review Corner (Cont'd)

other three treating CORPORATE VALUES under three subheadings: Looking Inward, Looking Outward, and International Business. A brief introduction by the authors to each section gives an overview of the cases considered there. The cases - most of them copyrighted by the Harvard Business School - are judiciously selected and provide the student with a detailed understanding of the context in which difficult decisions must be made. In addition to a summary of the firm's history, cases often include a brief biography of the person who must decide. Readers who might tend to hold a clear-cut view of corporate decision making are forced to confront complexities and ambiguities. Occasionally, in addition to the cases, a helpful extended "Note" (e.g., on product safety or on pesticide exports) is included. Sometimes the case presented is less a particular case than a summary of thorny issues troubling an industry. "Smoking and Health: U.S. Tobacco Companies - National and International Operations," for example, could be enormously helpful to students seeking reliable background for discussion of this sensitive area. Similarly, "The Beliefs of Borg-Warner" traces in concrete steps the development of a corporate creed which touches many ethical bases. Teachers will also appreciate the research embedded within the individual cases, e.g., the factual summary of the history of apartheid and of U.S. corporate history in South Africa in the case of "Dresser Industries and South Africa" or the exhaustive delineation of the controversy surrounding a TV docudrama in "The Death of a Princess." Exhibits containing detailed charts and statistics which follow the case presentations offer further resources for discussants. Making some concession to the need for a text, the authors include two appendices: the first explaining and applying the case method and summarizing some ethical frameworks useful in general management; the second providing a lengthier (but still condensed) survey of ethical frameworks for decision making.

This book with its varied collection of carefully researched cases is a major contribution to the field of business ethics. However, it seem better suited to graduate than undergraduate classes. The lack of a text to guide students in relating the bewildering array of ideas and options that surface in the cases to a coherent framework detracts from the book's usefulness as a college textbook. The appendix is well reasoned and thought provoking; yet this separate discussion of ethical frameworks is too condensed and sophisticated to serve the needs of the average undergraduate ethics class. One doubts that even the Instructor's Manual - which sounds like a boon for teachers - will make up for the lack of a student text. However, the book might well be used with a class of top undergraduates and/or philosophy majors. In any case, it furnishes a gold mine of practical supplementary reading for college courses in business ethics and should be on the reading list and on the reference shelf for every such course.



Center Awarded Two Grants (Cont'd)

The second module, ownership and copyright, will analyze the dilemma of the advancement of science versus individual rights to ownership and remuneration. A review of legal issues and court decisions will be incorporated along with an evaluation of contracts and technological safeguards protecting ownership. Ethical norms in ownership rights will be reviewed. Case studies, pedagogical strategies, and resources will also be included.

The Center will pilot the modules and conduct a workshop for faculty and computer professionals in 1986. Readers interested in this project should contact the Center.

The Association of American Colleges notified the Center in August of 1985 that it had been awarded a grant for the development of a course module on the theme: "Internationalization of American Business: An Integrated Perspective." This project has been undertaken in response to the rapid development of global economic interdependence, focusing on the social and ethical dilemmas encountered by American multinational corporations. It will assist faculty and business persons in understanding and teaching the ethical dimensions of international business.

The Center will develop an integrated module on ethical dilemmas faced by American multinational corporations in third world nations. The project will integrate research within the disciplines of economics, ethics, law, political science, and sociology. The following ethical concerns will be examined from this integrated perspective: (1) the structure and controversy surrounding the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, (2) the extent to which corporate policies inhibit or foster social traditions, (3) depletion and underpricing of non-renewable resources, (4) technology transfer, and (5) environmental pollution. The module will contain lecture and reading material as well as case studies focusing on the economic, historical, political, and social impact of specific ethical problems. The lecture and reading material provided will examine various ethical approaches, social implications of economic decision, and divergent cultural perspectives on the roles of workers, managers, and multinationals.

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Computers and Education

by Dr. Eileen Brady

The psychosocial impact of the revolution in computer technology may ultimately exert a more profound transformation of society than its technical applications in education, science, and industry would suggest. In an article entitled "Microcomputers in Education," Mark Lepper provides an illuminating analogy to clarify the technological advances in the computer industry. If the technological achievements of the automotive industry had paralleled those in computers, we could purchase a Rolls Royce for $2.75 that would get 3,000,000 miles to the gallon. The widespread advances in computer technology have presented a series of ethical dilemmas for society that transcend the narrower confines of computer professionals. One such issue is the potential impact of computer technology on the allocation and distribution of power within American society.

Concerns have been expressed about the potential of computer technology to foster centralization, maintain the status quo, create alienation, and foster social inequities. In particular, the potential of computer technology to foster social inequities between the underprivileged and the privileged segments of our society merits the serious consideration of those involved in American education. Traditionally, the path to social equality has relied upon the idea of equal opportunity which was presumably ensured by almost universal access to education. In a society that is increasingly reliant upon computer technology, however, differential access to computer education could widen the gap, generating a predominantly two-tiered society. One tier would be comprised of those who design the sophisticated hardware, develop the applications software, and manage the technology, while the second tier would consist of those who only assemble the equipment or who function as computer operators. These tiers may already be emerging due to widespread inequities existent in the access of the wealthy and the poor to computer education at the elementary and secondary school levels.

In the poorest school districts, there are insufficient funds to purchase computers. This effectively eliminates a child's access to computer education. In contrast, wealthier school districts have pressured schools to introduce computer education relatively early in the curriculum.

Another potential factor that can restrict a child's access to computer education lies in the limited selection of available educational software. Educational programs vary from those which rely heavily on routine drill to those which foster problem-solving skills. Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) systems which depend upon individualized drill and practice permit children to learn at their own rate and to receive immediate feedback, both positive and negative. Although this type of educational software may supplement traditional classroom techniques, the more advanced and expensive simulations and specially designed educational games frequently provide a significantly more enriched educational experience.

Educational games have been developed to facilitate learning and retention; these programs attempt to integrate instructional objectives with motivational appeal to foster the child's natural curiosity. The

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Empowerment for Change (Cont'd)

Third, in a special way the curriculum seeks to enhance the ability of our students to deepen their appreciation of the heritage of Western Civilization. The faculty believes that the origins and heritage of Western Civilization offers the students an understanding of how we got to be who we are. In addition the study of the Humanities presents the students with a survey of the values of Western culture.

Fourth, the new curriculum promotes the appreciation of the analytical techniques employed by the Social Sciences in the analysis of reality. Knowledge of these intellectual tools should broaden the students' comprehension of the society in which they live.

Fifth, the knowledge of the scientific method as exemplified in the study of the natural and physical sciences further enriches the intellectual skills of the students. The new curriculum offers the students the opportunity to expand their appreciation of what science and its methodologies contribute to the understanding of reality.

Finally, the five values embodied in the new curriculum are all integral to enhanced ethical sensitivity and lay the foundation for thoughtful reflection on professional life, placing that life in the broadest of social contexts and empowering the students to become active participants in their own development.

Noteworthy

From time to time the Center Report will indicate resources and publicize events that will be of interest to the readership.

- Professional Ethics: Power and Paradox by Karen Kebacqz (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985). According to the author:

  This book is written for all professionals seeking a framework for making ethical decisions. It is for 'helping' professionals who experience doubt, anxiety, or curiosity about their roles and seek guidance for the ethical dilemmas they face every day. It is also for lay people and clients who are concerned about whether the care they receive is unethical or unprofessional. But above all it is for clergy and for clergy-in-training whose need for guidance in professional ethics has been sadly neglected. (10)

- Management Ethics: A View From the Top.

  This video program profiles the efforts of three major companies to clarify ethical standards and preserve the integrity of their employees. Alton Whitehouse, Chairman and CEO, describes circumstances that led SOHIO to adopt its Principles of Business Conduct. Edward Hennessy, Chairman and CEO, relates the background to and benefits from Allied Corporation's innovative three-day ethics seminar for senior managers. The role of Johnson and Johnson's Credo in guiding the company through the Tylenol poisoning crisis is described by James Burke, Chairman and CEO. Background narrative and commentary is provided by Robert F. Froehlke, Chairman of the Board of the Equitable Life Assurance Society and Chairman of the Ethics Resource Center. (Length: 14:30) (Source: Video summary)

  Available from the Ethics Resource Center, Incorporated, 1730 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (202-223-3411).

- Ethical Problem Solving in the Social Sciences by Joan E. Sieber, Ph.D. (McGraw-Hill, 1984) is a computer simulation, the purpose of which is "to give students experience in handling, in an ethical manner, those problems that are likely to occur in the course of research and consulting activities." (Price: $49.50)

- The Corporate Conscience, "a series of documentaries exploring business ethics was broadcast in 1984 on National Public Radio. These in-depth half-hour productions include case studies, told through first-person accounts, of delicate business judgment calls - with human responsibility implications." Available from SounDocumentaries, P.O. Box 777, Cambridge, MA 02139. (Price: $89.95, prepaid.)

We'd like to hear from you. . .

The Center for professional Ethics welcomes your response to all articles appearing in this issue and would be pleased to provide any additional information on upcoming events upon request. Write to Manhattan College Center for Professional Ethics, Manhattan College, Room 434, Riverdale, NY 10471

Computers and Education (Cont'd)

final class of educational software employs the simulation of events that could occur in the real world of the child. These programs increase the child's capacity to learn the outcomes of selecting specific alternatives, thus facilitating discovery learning.

While no definite conclusions have been reached, research in education has tentatively suggested that underprivileged children benefit more in using the motivationally enriched games than they do with the simpler, drill oriented programs. To the extent that poorer school districts are unable to purchase these programs, a child's access to an equal education is limited. In a society that increasingly relies upon high technology to provide economic equality, equality of instructional access to this technology is mandatory.

Center Awarded Two Grants (Cont'd)

As a result of these case studies, broader ethical issues which have emerged will be discussed. These ethical issues include: (1) the relationship between cultural and ethical norms, (2) the differences between ethical pluralism and ethical relativism, (3) the need for communication with and respect for other societies, (4) the tension between ethics and the law, and (5) the importance of tolerance in the face of ambiguity and diversity in ethical analysis. Finally, the economic and managerial implications for the functioning of American corporations in an international context will be examined.

Pedagogical issues as well as bibliographical and audio-visual resources will be incorporated and a regional workshop on the module will be held.

Readers also interested in this project should contact the Center.